

The Adventures of Crimson Team

by Dark The Relentless

Category: Halo

Genre: Adventure, Humor

Language: English

Characters: OC, S. Palmer

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2014-01-16 06:34:15

Updated: 2014-03-29 18:10:49

Packaged: 2016-04-27 04:44:08

Rating: T

Chapters: 6

Words: 21,862

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: A written down, cannon oriented story about me and my friends playing Halo 4 Spartan Ops. (Inspired by our role-play.) Enjoy this story about the 'unique' 4-man Spartan Team known as Crimson. (Put on hold for the time being, EP 1 complete)

1. The Start of Something New

****Earth, Sol System, Aboard the UNSC Infinity: February 6, 2558****

****6 Months After New Phoenix Incident****

* * *

><p>Earth. The home planet for the human race, victim of another attack from another alien race that had it out for humans.<p>

Had one would say, since the attack was thwarted and the leader of said race seemingly killed by none other than the Master Chief, hero and savior of the human race who many thought perished on following the premature Halo activation on the Ark. Though this information has been kept from the public for the time being, courtesy of ONI, many member of the UNSC have been discussing the Spartan II's return.

In one of _Infinity_'s many hanger bays, a former ODST now Spartan IV lead on a railing along a high up walkway. The Spartan wore his custom MJOLNIR GEN2 armor; a Recon helmet with a "Legendary" colored visor, a Mk VI chest and forearms, War Master shoulders, and XG-89 Narrow legs guards. His armor color was pure silver.

He took off his Recon helmet, tucked it under his arm and stared at the glorious blue planet, thinking back on the events that happened six months prior. "Prometheans eh?" He mumbled, silently wishing he did something to help the Chief prevent the attack. Despite the Spartan II's successful efforts, the citizens of New Phoenix were

"composed" by the vengeful Ur-Didact. All that remained of them are shiny ash piles that showed where they once stood.

He clenched his fist, if that bastard wasn't already dead he would have gladly killed him for what he did. 'Than again, from the reports these Prometheans could control space to a degree, warping where ever they wished. So who could say that the Didact is dead? Its doubtful he survived a nuke but...' He scratched his head in annoyance. 'So many goddamn uncertainties. Blasted Forerunners and their technological achievements.'

"Something on your mind friend?" Said a familiar voice coming behind him. The Spartan smiled. "Can't be." He turned around. Sure enough, it was who he though: His old friend David. "David!" He threw out his arms and hugged the man, it had been years since they last meet. Back in his old ODST days, he fought along side this man in many great battles. All of their meetings on the battlefield where coincidental though, since David was a Marine, or _former_ Marine given his recent growth spurt and current uniform.

He let go of David and took a few steps back, giving the man some space. "How are you mate?" David shrugged. "Can't complain, especially since they excepted me into the IVs. Better paygrade, better armor, better things for me to go 'boom' with, what more can you ask for?"

"A girlfriend who wouldn't leave you after she knows your true personality?"

David roared in laughter, the man when through more girlfriends than one could ever hope to get a winning lotto ticket. "That's true, that is very true." He calmed down, wiping a tear from his eye. "You always knew how to make a guy laugh Joe."

Joe smiled and shrugged. "Tis what I do." David walked pasted him and leaned on the railing with his arms crossed. "Nice view. Hard to believe she was attacked recently." Joe half turned toward his friend, looked at the Earth one again and nodded. "So how was augmentation?"

"Eh," David flexed his shoulders. "Not as bad as everyone says they are. At least not as bad as they where for the II's. How long you been a IV anyway?" Joe fully turned his body toward the Earth, he shifted his weight between his feet. "About 3 months, saw a little Innies action here and there, but nothing special." David nodded. "I see, so what's this Spartan team we're being put in? Any idea what that's about?"

"The higher-ups aboard _Infinity_ like organizing Spartans into fireteams or so I'm told. Ours is designated Crimson, a brand new team on its debut tore of duty." David push off the railing, turned to Joe and raised his eyebrow. "Wait for real? Just picking five Spartans at random and putting them into a team? Isn't that a little odd?" Joe meet David's gaze. "Four in our case, and yeah it is a bit odd, but from what I know the members of the team are some of the most promising Spartan IV's from this batch." It took Joe a few moments before he realized David didn't fully understand what he meant. "From our latest recruits, such as yourself Dave."

David responded in an 'Ah' followed by a few nods. "Know anything

about the other two member of our team?" "Actually, I do." Joe pushed off the railing, using the movement as a way to stretch his arms. "One's named Josh, he's former ODST like me but we never meet. The other is former Army, a miss Brittany." He turned and squinted his eyes at David. "Don't get any ideas mate. I don't need her to be freaked out by you attempts to, as you say, 'get it on'." David laughed. "No promises but I'll try."

A few moments of silence past between the two before he asked another question. "How do you know this stuff anyway?" Joe chuckled. "Well rank has its privileges, I'm a Captain now." David immediately saluted to and saluted him. "Sir!" He shouted.

Joe returned the salute. "As you were," David complied. "I see that I wasn't the only one to be promoted." Joe continued. "Warrant Officer eh? What you specialize in?—No don't tell me. Explosives, am I right?" David nodded. "Yes sir. My one and true military profession. Except shooting things."

Joe smiled. "Ah no mate, that a prerequisite. You need to shoot things to be in the military." David smiled, setting up for one of their old inside jokes. "Even forklift drivers?" "Especially forklift drivers!" The two laughed at the old joke, both forgot what the mean for the joke was but gladly use it anyway.

A few minutes past as the two turned their attention to the going on's of the hanger bay. So many crew running around checking equipment, moving ordnance and other gear, and so on and so on. Another Pelican dropship landed in the bay, dropping off five other Spartans— you could tell from the height and uniform they wore, since half of said uniform was the gel layer of the MJOLNIR armor.

Joe noticed that Spartan Palmer, the Commander of all the Spartan IVs on Infinity approached the group. He nudged David with his shoulder and pointed her out. Together they looked on as one of the group walked up to her. Neither could hear what he said but Joe could guess, given the man's body language.

"That little lady there is Commander Palmer. Our new boss." Joe said. "And by the looks of it, that guy tried to pull a 'you' on her." David chuckled. "That's why I never hit on CO's. Always ends the same way, one big explosion." He opened his hand and made a "boom" sound. The two remain quiet as they watched the commander and the group of IVs leave.

"Maybe I should try the red-head?" David nudged his shoulder into Joe's chest. "No problem if she's not on our team right Captain?" Joe gently pushed him aside, a little more so than he wanted given that he was still in his armor. "Go for it if you want, but from the looks of her she's Archadian. If she is careful, she'll kick your ass." David chuckled. "I'll be sure to do that."

Joe nodded. "Well I'll see you at orientation tonight." He put his helmet back on. "Be sure to make a good first impression for the team." He turned around and began to walk down the hallway when David called out to him. "Any particular reason you're in your Spartan armor? Another privilege of rank?"

Joe turned his head back. "Well yes but not the reason why. Its an old habit I picked up in the Covenant war. Be prepared for anything

right?" David shrugged. "I guess, if you look at it from paranoia stand point." Joe waved him off and continued to walk down the hall.

'I don't expect him to understand.' He thought as he recoiled that one "battle" long ago, more like a slaughter than anything else. Joe was the survivor of one of the Covenants attempts to board a UNSC ship and steal data from it. A move they did periodically throughout the war in the hopes of gaining the location of humanities homeworld. Completely caught by surprise, almost half the crew was wiped out before reaching a weapon. It was luck, pure luck and the timely arrival of a UNSC fleet that they managed to drive the bastards off the ship.

Ever since, he wore his ODST armor whenever he was aboard a ship. Even if he was ordered to take it off by the Captain or some other officer. Hell, if it wasn't the drastic state of the war he would have been court-martialed long ago...that and for his ONI ties. Joe was one of ONI's chosen ODST operatives, the only difference in uniform was a Recon helmet instead of the standard ODST one. The missions he went on behalf of ONI ranged from leading a squad to destroy sensitive data or assassinate a particular "High Value Target" to undercover ops, usually among Insurrectionist populations.

'Which is the reason why I can keep my "non-regulation" hairstyle.' He smiled, even though ONI gave him a pink slip for working ops for them, they granted him certain privileges for 'old times sake.' One of which was his current hairstyle, civilian standard short hair with a long 'flip' down the right side of his face that stretched down to his chin. One had to appreciate how ONI rewarded their agents for a job well done, despite their whole "Military Mafia" reputation.

* * *

><p>A few hours later...(Spartan Joe's POV)

Spartan orientation for the new arrivals on _Infinity_ was held. All the IVs aboard, both the 'old breed' and the new gathered in one of the ship's assembly rooms, had the feel of a gym though. It started off with a greeting from the ship's captain Tom Lasky, followed by a greeting from the ship A.I Roland. Both stated that _Infinity_ was heading out to a Forerunner planet called Requiem and that we would be the decisive players on the ground. Captain Lasky finished by thanking us for coming aboard and saying that he looked forward to each and everyone of our successes.

After he left, Commander Palmer took over, stating the expectations of being a Spartan and what SHE EXPECTED out of each and everyone of us. Then, she filled us in on what to expect on Requiem, just encase anyone didn't read the memo. *cough* David. *cough* *cough*

We'll be fight both the Covenant faction known as Storm and the new Promethean race who were working together for one reason or another. "Our main objective is to establish research bases on planet seeing as Science team always like to poke at every shiny object they can fine." Commander Palmer joked, pausing for a few moments so the Spartans can let out some laughs. "Unfortunately for us, this planet is full of them." She continued. "And full of Covies and Prometheans, which is why we're here. To clear it out so the eggheads can work

undisturbed to their little hearts content."

The rest of the orientation was "meet and greet" or more like "show and stare" as Palmer and Roland took turns calling Spartans to the stage, announcing to the world which fireteam they were. I learned that the group David and I watched earlier were called "Majestic", a fireteam I've heard of before but with a new member: Spartan Thorne. I made a note of this team, as I had a feeling we would be working close together in the upcoming campaign.

Soon enough, my team was called to the stage. Many Spartans look at me with curiosity, as I still had my armor on. Commander Palmer seemed to ignore this, either cause she knew the reason why I was allowed to or decided to let it go just this once. I looked at my fellow teammates Josh and Brittany. Josh had that look that most ODS have after a few drops and came to respect him instantly, though we never meet anyone brave enough to drop into orbit in that glorified trash can straight into hell was my brother.

Brittany had a smile on her face, like she was proud she was here, as a Spartan. I didn't blame her, most of the new arrivals had that same look on their face. That, and she was Army. The Army didn't get as much credit as they deserve for their role in the Covenant war, especially on Reach. So she had the right to be proud for her acceptance into the IVs.

After what seemed to be an eternity, orientation ended. I didn't quite remember the rest of it as I dozed off, another advantage of being allowed to wear my armor, but from what I heard Palmer gave an inspirational speech. I didn't ask for the details.

Each team was asked to "spend time together" since we'd all be launching straight into enemy territory in the morning. We(Crimson Team) gathered in the mess hall, figured it was a chance to break the ice AND eat at the same time. Despite my earlier warnings, David did his usually first impression routine, making a fool of himself. This however, had the opposite effect on Josh and Brittany than I expected.

Brittany was one of those people who'd get along with most people, she'll fit right in with David's madness and my controlled madness.

Josh was like David and me...well more like me; he could tell when it was proper to be a goof and when to be serious. Later, David and him were at ends with each other over some stupid reason I didn't really catch, but it turned into one of those "who was the better man" contests as each tried to show off to the other. It started by doing ridiculous stunts and tricks like walking on their hands and balancing trays on their nose with a fork. All in good fun till an officer yelled at them.

After that, they told of their past 'acts of valor' in the war. Josh had survived more crazy battles than I though(before reading his file that its), as he fought on Paris IV, Reach, Tribute, and Earth. He was lucky to make it out of each alive.

"I fought hand to hand with a Brute Chieftain!" David boasted this old story I was all too familiar with. "Tried as he might, the beast couldn't hit me with his hammer! For I was too fast for him!" I

smirked. "OR it was the fact that I kept shooting the hammer every time it was about to hit you, diverting it so it wouldn't hit that ugly mug of yours."

David gave me a look like I just took all the fun out of him. "Captain, why did you have to ruin it? I almost made Josh here admit I'm better than him!" "Yeah, the only thing your better than me at is babbling." Josh said with a smirk. "And explosives." I added, patting David on his shoulder. "Dave here is an artist when it comes to explosions."

David smiled, giving me a thumb up for the "bragging rights" I just gave him. He turned back to Josh and told him about his work with explosions. Eventually, Brittany and Josh came to realize something about David. To never trust him with explosives and expect what normally happens to happen.

The rest of the night we shared stories of our past experiences, I of course had to withhold all the classified ops I did as an ONI agent, but it was enough to impress. Before it grew too late, we bid each other goodnight and headed to our respected bunks. "Looks like we'll make a great team after all." I muttered to myself as I made my way to my room.

When I arrived, I was a bit surprised to find that Josh and two member from Majestic team shared the same room as me. Not that the room couldn't compensate for all of us since it was twice the size of a normal room Military personal usually sleep in.

Our roommates from Majestic were Anthony Madsen, a sniper like myself, and new addition Gabriel Thorne. We engaged in some minor small talk (favorite weapon, how long have you been a Spartan, what kind of girls you like, that sort of talk) before hitting the sack.

Tomorrow was going to be a long day.

2. Operation: LAND GRAB

UNSC Infinity, 04:52 February 7, 2558

* * *

><p>"I'm telling you mate, within the Spartan IV program individual ranks are meaningless." Joe explained to Josh as the two walked down to the Armor bay in Spartan Deck. "While whatever rank you held before you joined still stands, everyone among the IVs is equal regardless of rank. Commander Palmer is an exception of course, but the only thing close to a higher rank among Spartans is Squad Leader."<p>

Josh scratched his head. "Yeah I heard about that, talk is the man who put this together said we're 'genetically superior' and the title Spartan is rank enough." He sighed. "And all the hard work I did to receive the rank Warrant Officer goes flying out the window." Joe chuckled. "Well, you have the experience to look back on eh? You specialize in heavy weapons correct?"

Josh nodded. "Anything from a SAW to a Spartan Laser I'm qualified to

operate." Joe patted him in the back. "Good to know I can trust someone other than David to handle explosive ordnance. Speaking of which, don't tell him about the whole rank thing. I still want him to refer to me as Captain for a little bit longer. " He pushed Josh ahead of him. "Now get suited up! We'll be taking on Covies soon enough."

Josh responded with a lazy salute and headed off to an empty armor bay station. Joe turned around and headed to the nearest armory to pick out his usually gear when he spotted Brittany. The latter smiled and waved at him before stepping into an armor bay. Joe waved back at her as he continued on his way.

A few moments passed when he spotted David in one of the armor bays, seeming to be having the time of his life. "Having a good time there mate?" Joe asked as he stopped in front of the bay, he smiled shook his head slightly at his friend. "This is kind of fun!" David yelled as the machine placed his armor on piece by piece. "Like one of those ring rides that spin you around every which way, only not as intense."

Joe chuckled and waved his friend goodbye as he continued on his way to the Armory. As he walked, Commander Palmer strolled out to the middle of the deck, she wore her silver Scout armor minus the helmet. She looked over all the Spartans in the armor bays, nodding to herself with satisfaction, and began to speak. Her voice magnified so everyone on the deck could hear her, a trick courtesy of the A.I Roland.

"Ladies...and other Spartans. Listen up, I know you heard some of this before but I have to make sure that every last one of you are on the right page. Your new work place is a planet first discovered by humanity 6 months ago called Requiem. Some of the old hands here know what you're in for, the rest of you are due for an education. The eggheads upstairs what to set up research stations, but before they can do that we have to fend off some Covenant squatters. The Covies. They believe this is the home of one of their gods. The way I see it, if those freaks want to meet God, then it is our duty to help them along."

Joe reach the armory when Palmer said the part about "eggheads" and vaguely listened from there. He placed his hand on his chin as he scanned the weapon racks filled with various UNSC weaponry, debating on which weapons he should choose for the upcoming battle. He decided and grabbed a DMR, a Magnum, several clips for each of them, two combat knives and a handful of frag grenades.

He checked over his weapons before putting them on his person, double checked to see if the grenades where firmly in place and wouldn't detonate prematurely, and made sure all his spare clips where within easy reach. After he was satisfied with his inspection, he strolled to the center of the armory and waited for his teammates.

After a few moments, Joe sat on a nearby crate and pulled out one of his combat knives, he began to balance in on one finger. This continued for a minute or so when he felt the floor rumble slightly. He was about to comment on it when Josh came in, followed by David, Brittany and several other Spartans all in their separate armor configurations.

"Looks like the party started." One of them said, Joe wasn't sure who. "So I hear." He said more to himself than anyone else. Joe sat up and walked over to his team, they were picking what weapons they were going to take for the battle.

Joe walked up to the nearest one; Josh, stopped beside the man and patted him on the shoulder. "Listen up Crimson. Sooner or later we'll be called to battle. Just want to say this now; whatever happens, I am proud to fight alongside each and everyone of you."

David brought his fist up. "You can count on me Captain." Brittany picked up a Battle Rifle, slapped a mag in, and loaded a round in the chamber. "I'll be sure to live up to your expectations." Josh turned his head to Joe, the latter turned to meet him. Josh nodded. "Feet first into hell sir." Joe smiled inside his visor. "ODST all the way." He turned to leave. "Meet me in the hanger bay when you're done." And with that, he strolled out of the armory.

Demarco from Majestic team walked over to the remainder of Crimson team, Madsen followed close behind. He was in full SOLDIER variant armor while his 'tail' was in a full RECON variant. "Well I'm all inspired now." Demarco said, hinting that he heard Joe's little speech. "So where are the bad guys?"

David walked up to him. "On the ground, which I will personally introduce you to if you keep being an ass." He shoved Demarco into Madsen, the latter manage to catch his squad leader, preventing the two from falling. Demarco took a few steps toward David. "Take it easy! Don't you know how to take a joke?"

David let out a short laugh. "Of course, but what you're doing isn't what I call a _joke._" He walked up to Demarco, the two were nearly face to face now.

"You see, what _your_ doing is disrespecting the man who saved the lives of me and my old unit more times that I dare count. So, I would appreciate if you don't from now on. If that's going to be a problem-" He fully stretched out his arms at both sides. "-I'm more than willing to discuss it. Right here, right now."

Demarco stared at David silently for a few moments, thinking on how he should handle this situation he got himself in. Finally, he nodded a few time before walking back to his team, Madsen briefly looked at David before strolling after his teammate.

David let his arms drop to his sides and exhaled. He didn't realize he has holding his breath. Josh walked to his side. "Wow...I never thought I'd see a serious side to you Dave." David looked at him and chuckled. "There's a lot you don't know about me."

The two walked back to the weapon racks, finished picking out their gear for the upcoming operation and, with Brittany, headed off to meet Joe in the hanger.

* * *

><p>A few minutes later...

Crimson team sat inside the hold of a Pelican dropship. They were waiting along with several other Spartan teams in separate Pelicans

for the air corridor to Requiem to be cleared of Covenant resistance.

During the wait, Joe had plenty of time to look over his teams' armor configuration and weaponry.

David wore a 'Solar' visored EVA helmet and chest, Defender shoulders, Outer-plated forearms and legs. His armor was colored Silver armor Red lines. He had an Assault Rifle, a belt of five frag grenades across his chest, several cans of C7 and a Sticky Detonator.

Josh wore a Protector helmet, a Stalker chest, CRSH shoulders, ODS legs, and Mark V forearms. It was colored Steel and Blue. He had a Battle Rifle, a Railgun, a combat knife strapped on his right leg and several frag grenades,

Brittany wore a Gungnir helmet, Tracker shoulders, an Enforcer chest, Mk VI forearms, Over-locking legs. Her armor was colored White with Purple lines. She had a SAW, a Battle Rifle, three frag grenades and a first aid kit attached to her left leg.

Josh nudged his head at David. "Any reason you decided to go with the 'Ramdo' look?" David held his AR up and shook it several times. "Cause I'm one dangerous son of a bitch!" He pointed the rifle at Josh, still shaking it playfully. "Don't you forget that!"

Josh raised his hands, BR in his right. "All right, I wouldn't tough guy." He lowered his hands and turned to Brittany. "You ever deal with guys like him?" "Loads of times." Brittany hit his shoulder. "When we get back, remind me to tell you about them. You wouldn't believe the stories I have to share."

"Joy." Josh turned to Joe. "Hear that Captain? Brittany wants to share here love life with me." Brittany slapped Josh on his head as soon as he finished speaking. David laughed as Josh did a "what was that for?" gesture. Joe chuckled. "Well Josh, looks like you have a reason NOT to get shot today."

David was about to add to that when someone over the comms give the Spartans' dropships clearance to launch. The engines roared to life, lifting the ship up. The Pelican propelled out of the hanger bay, followed by several others and their Broadsword escorts.

"Here we go." Joe said calmly, he sat up and moved to the front of the Pelican. He placed his hand on the only piece of metal separating the cockpit from the rest of the dropship and looked out the viewport. Debris from several Covenant cruisers and UNSC frigates filled the space between the giant metal planet known as Requiem. From their course, they were heading into a giant glowing hole: the entrance to the Forerunner Shield World.

The pilot, who seemed to know Joe was there the entire time, looked back at him briefly. "Quite a sight, an't it Spartan?" Joe nodded. "Forerunner tech usually is."

* * *

><p>Requiem, location designated REQ-931-B or "The Quarry"

5 Pelican dropships flew above the series of canyons and mesas. Suddenly, Palmer's voice came over the comms.

"Spartan Sarah Palmer, Infinity Commander to all Navy, Army, and Marine forces, you can relax. The Spartans are here."

Crimson team checked over their gear one last time, loading their weapons if they hadn't done so already, and made absolutely sure everything was in A-OK condition for kick some Covenant ass. As they went through their routine, another unfamiliar voice came on the comms.

"Spartan Miller to Fireteams Castle, Majestic, Domino, Ivy and Crimson, sending coordinates for your Ops now." The Pelican pilots each received the individual coordinates for the Spartan teams they were caring, the dropships broke formation to the predetermined locations to drop off the teams.

As Crimson's dropship neared their LZ, Spartan Miller came over the comms again, on their team channel. "Crimson, I'll be your handler for today."

"Roger that Miller." Joe said, he walked over to the end of the Pelican as his team stood up. "So we got a babysitter now?" Josh said aloud, more as a complain than a question.

Joe looked over his shoulder at Josh. "It's more than that," He pointed at the roof of the Pelican. "He's our link to Infinity Command, any orders for us that come down while we're in the field go to him, not to us. That, and he can get in touch with local units and help coordinate them, he even has our eyes in the sky and tell us about any surprises."

"So he's much more valuable than any 'babysitter'." Brittany added in. Josh responded by shrugging in a "what do you want from me?" way. The Pelican's back ramp opened up, revealing a desert, some Warthogs, a Covenant sniper tower and several Marines. Crimson team stepped out of the dropship, it flew away as soon as they were off. Joe looked at the Hogs, there were 3, each a different type. He looked around at the Marines, he counted six in total.

Miller's voice came on the comms again. "Crimson, we've dropped you off behind enemy lines to lend some Marines a hand. Play nice now. We're here to knock some heads together."

David walked up to Joe. "By 'we' he means us right?" Joe let out a short laugh then walked off to meet the Marine who was heading towards them. "Figure that one out yourself mate?" David shook his head a few times. "I meant he's not coming down to fight too is he?" Joe looked over his shoulder at David, still walking all the while. "I doubt it mate, he's doing the tech part of the job while we're doing the hands on part. We shoot while he tells us what to shoot."

"That's one way of putting it." A familiar voice sounded over the comm channel. "Commander Palmer," Joe stopped and put his left hand on the side of his helmet, the universal signal for 'I'm taking a call.' Even though it was unnecessary given the MJOLNIR comm link configuration, the gesture let the approaching Marine know he was momentarily occupied. "How long have you been on the line?"

"Long enough to hear your explanation of Miller's job. Speaking of which, Miller light up the targets for Crimson." Four red blips appeared on Joe's visor. "Those are power cores, intended for long-range distribution. Destroy them or the Covies will build bases and we'll have a hell of a time rooting them out."

"We'll make sure that doesn't happen." Joe turned to David. "An't that right Dave?" The latter pumped his fist in the air as a response. Joe turned back around, the Marine who was approaching them earlier stood in front of him patiently waiting for a chance to talk. "What's the situation here Sergeant?"

"We've been trying to destroy those cores for the past while, only managed to destroy one so far. They dropped us with two full squads, now it's down to the six of us." Joe nodded at the Marine. "We'll see what we can do about the others." He turned and gestured Brittany and Josh to come to him. "Take one of these Marines and load up a Hog. See what kind of defenses these Storm bastards have. The rest of us will follow shortly."

They nodded and paced off towards the Gauss Hog. Along the way they gestured for a Marine to follow, loaded up in the Warthog-Brittany driving, Josh gunning and the Marine riding shotgun- and drove off. Not even a minute later, the sound of the Warthog's turret firing echoed along the canyon walls followed by the sound of plasma fire.

Joe turned back to the Sergeant. "Have one of your men provide overwatch from that sniper tower. The rest of you load up in the Hogs, we're taking these guys by storm." The Sergeant saluted and moved to carry out his orders. Joe turned around and walked back to David. "I see what you did there." He said as Joe passed.

"Clever right?" Joe waved his hand at David. "Let's go, Rocket Hog, you're gunning." David fist pumped, let out a quiet "yes", and followed after Joe. A Marine with a BR joined them, all three loaded up in the Hog. Joe looked over and saw the third Hog load up with the Sergeant and two other Marines and drove off.

Joe was about to do the same when he heard the crack of a Sniper rifle. He looked up and saw the Marine left to provide cover in the tower, sure enough, he wielded a Sniper. 'Well if you gonna leave someone to cover you from afar, might as well be someone with the right weapon to do so.' And with that, Joe started up the Warthog and drove off.

Joe and David's hog passed by several Covie bodies and some destroyed Ghost. They also noticed that one of the red blips was missing. Joe opened the team comm link. "Why didn't you tell us you destroyed one of the power cores?" Josh answered on his end. "Cause you didn't ask, sir."

Joe chuckled before speaking through the comm again. "Fair enough, what's your status?" Brittany answered this time. "Just took out a Wraith, now engaging an enemy defensive line near the second core with the other Hog. You boys better hurry before we kill all the bad guys." The comm shut off with a click.

"Hear that Dave? Looks like we have a challenge on our hands." David

laughed. "I say bring it!" "I'm game." The Marine riding with them added. Joe floored the Hog, they reached the other Hogs just in time to see Josh destroy the second Shade turret. Josh seen them arrive, turned and waved at them as he balanced off the back of the Warthog. Only managing to say on due to his one hand holding onto the Gauss turret and one of his legs firmly on the Hog.

"Look who's here!" He said in a pose that some would take when going 'Ahee.' David responded by flipping the bird at him. Joe drove the Hog right on by. "Yeah, the really men are here. You can relax while we take care of the rest."

"Oh thanks, I think we deserve a break for doing most the work."

David looked over his shoulder and pointed at the second power core. "You missed a spot!" He turned the Rocket Pods towards it and fired. The rockets made contact and blew the core to pieces. Josh waved dismissively, Brittany chose this moment to start up the Warthog again. They followed after Joe and David's Hog.

Up ahead, a Phantom dropped off a fresh Wraith tank in front of them and flew away. The Wraith turned to the nearest Hog-the one with the Sergeant- and fired. The Marine managed to swerve the Warthog enough to avoid a direct hit, but the blast imploded off its left side making it fall on its side. Joe speed his hog up and commanded David to fire on the Covenant tank, Josh assisted by firing his Gauss turret at it.

Overwhelmed by the combined firepower, the Wraith exploded in a ball of blue plasma fire. Now with no enemies in the immediate area, Joe pulled his Hog up to the toppled over one. He was relieved to see that the Marines survived the blast, well most of them. "You ok Sergeant?"

The Marine walked over to Joe. "James took the blunt of the blast, needless to say he didn't make it. The two of us will live though, still ready to shoot some aliens." Joe nodded, he pointed to their Warthog. "That Hog still work?" The Sergeant turned around. "Can't say that I know sir." He walked back to it, gestured for the other Marine to come help him, and pushed the Hog back on its wheels. He hoped in and tried to start it, after a few tries it started up again.

Joe smiled, he lifted his hand out the side of his Hog and swung it around in small circles. "Party's still on boys and girls." The three Hog moved off, Joe's leading followed by Brittany's on his right and the Sergeant's on his left. They were met by another Wraith and two Grunts with Fuel Rods, they were quickly mowed down by the Warthogs' combined firepower, as was the power core they were guarding.

The three Hogs maneuvered towards the final core, all that guarded it were two Elites. One wielded a Concussion Rifle and fired at Brittany's Hog. Josh returned fire, the round cut through the Elite's upper torso, killing him instantly. The other ran towards a nearby Shade turret, and was cut down by the Marines.

Joe moved the Warthog in front of the final core, giving David a perfect shot to blow it up. "Alright Dave, blow it to hell so we can go." "With pleasure," David said as he jumped off the back of the

Hog. He walked over to the core, grabbed a few cans of C7, opened them with a knife and placed them all over the core. It wasn't exactly the way Joe expected but it would get the job done.

After a few minutes, David finished placing the C7 and got back in the Hog. Joe moved it far away from the core, when he and the others where at a safe distance, David blew the C7. The blast was powerful enough to render a Wraith tank into ash. All throughout the explosion, David laughed hysterically. The Marine riding with them looked at him with concern, wondering if the Spartan had gone insane.

When the blast cleared, Joe shook his head back and forth. "I'm telling you mate. I'll never know why you enjoy blowing stuff up at the extent you do. Overkill doesn't even begin to cover it."

David was about to respond to him when a new voice buzzed in on the comm channel. "Miller, you have multiple Phantom inbound on Crimson's position."

Brittany was the first to ask the question that was on everyone's mind at the moment...at least for the rest of Crimson anyway. "Who was that?" Miller answered over the comms. "Spartan Dalton, he in charge of providing air support for Spartan team, he also monitors enemy air traffic via our observation satellites."

"Well isn't that handy." Josh said. Soon enough, the Phantoms Dalton warned of arrived. They moved to the high ground and began to drop of troops plus another Wraith and two Ghosts. The three Warthogs raced towards the new arrivals and, much like there previous engagements, wiped out all that stood in their way. However, even MORE Phantom dropships showed up, dropping off more troops.

The closest group were where the defensive line for the second power core was, a mixture of Grunts and Elites. They opened fire as Crimson and the Marines rushed towards them. Plasma rounds singed on the Hogs as the made contact with the Storm forces, maneuvering amongst their ranks and running them down. A Carbine round broke through the windshield of Joe's hog and hit the Marine next to him. The Marine fell forward into the dashboard, he was dead. Joe ran over the Covenant Elite responsible for the Marines death.

After finishing with that group, they moved onto the next group. The results were very much the same, the only difference was that there where no fallen barricades that got in their way. Once they finished with that group, Crimson witnessed a third being dropped off along with another Wraith.

Joe was about to start another charge when David stopped him. The latter hopped out of the Hog and walked over to the damaged one the Sergeant was using. After a few moments, the two Marines stepped out of the Hog and walked over to Joe's. The Sergeant climbed into the back while the other moved to the passenger seat, he carefully pulled out the body of his fallen squad member and placed him on the ground before hopping into the seat.

Joe looked over to David, his friend was strapping the rest of his C7 all around the Warthog. Joe turned to the Marine next to him. "Let me guess, he said he had an idea to takeout the enemy Wraith and asked to use that Hog for it." The Marine nodded in confirmation. Joe did a

facepalm. "Typical David, always doing something crazy." The Sergeant laughed. "Yeah, you have quite the teammate there Captain." Joe rolled his eyes. 'You don't know the half of it.' He thought.

Without warning, David hopped in the damaged Warthog and drove towards the Covenant forces. He flew pasted by a group of Grunts, leaving his belt of grenades as a present, all active of course. They exploded, killing three and wounding two more. The Hog flew towards the Wraith tank, the Elite on its Plasma Cannon fired on David, only to be shot by the Marine Sniper a little ways away.

Moments before the Warthog collided with the Wraith, David broke the accelerator and jumped out. He rolled on the ground, picking himself up in time to see his bombed Hog collide with the artillery tank. David smiled and pulled out the detonator. He pressed it and watched as the Wraith exploded into a fireball.

Not to far behind, Brittany and Joe drove their Hogs towards the remaining group of Grunts and began to mop them up. As they pasted, Joe pulled out his Magnum and fired on two Grunts, killing them with headshots. He swung the Warthog around so that David would be right in front of him(and not the Hog) and stopped. He looked at David as he turned to him. "You're crazy, you know that."

David laughed. "Tell me something I don't know." Brittany's Hog skidded to a halt a few feet from them. "I hate to tell you this," She pointed to the sky. "But it looks like we have some Covies who are late to the party." The Phantom grew closer to them, it hovered over the top of a hill right in front of the humans and dropped off several Elites, Grunts, and a pair of Hunters.

Joe jumped out of the Warthog, upholstering the DMR on his back and pointed at the Covenant reinforcements. "Up the hill." He said before charging up it. The others complied and followed close behind. The Elites on the hill opened fire, exchanging plasma fire for bullet as Crimson team and the Marines returned fire. The Marine Sniper opened fire as well, popping off targets from the tower he was still on.

One by one, the Elites were wiped out but not before taking down one of the Marines and wounding another. The Sergeant grabbed his wounded comrade and hefted him down the hill, looking for a save place to treat the wound. For he knew that the Hunter pair was still alive, and they were as dangerous as a dozen Elites if not more.

Crimson reached the top of the hill, where the Hunter pair was waiting for them. Joe, Josh and Brittany threw several of their frag grenades at the pair, but it barely affected the two. Brittany opened fire on them, forcing them to shield their vulnerable areas, preventing them from firing their Fuel Rod Cannons for the time.

David and Josh flanked the pair from each side. Josh brought up his Railgun, aimed it at the closer Hunter and fired. The round breached its armor but the Hunter shrugged the round off like it was nothing. David took out his Sticky Detonator and fired at the other. The sticky landed on the Hunter's face, he detonated it, orange blood spilled onto the ground but the Hunter still stood. David quickly reloaded his weapon an aimed it again when the Hunter charged at

him.

Brittany reloaded and fired on that Hunter, but the titan ignored it and continued to bear towards David. It swung its massive shield arm at the Spartan, the latter ducked causing the blow to miss. The Hunter followed up with an uppercut, David rolled with the blow allowing him to get close to the massive beast. He dug his Sticky Detonator into the Hunter's 'throat', launched the grenade inside, than ran away from it before detonating the sticky grenade. Orange blood and meat bits scattered onto the sand, its headpiece fell on the floor with a _thump_.

The surviving Hunter roared angrily, it aimed its cannon at David. Before it could fire, Joe got its attention by shooting at its head, the Hunter moved to the Spartan and fired. The latter rolled to one side, picked himself up, and aimed his DMR at the Hunter. Only he _didn't_ fire, because the Hunter was right on top of him. It raised its shield arm high in the air and began to bring it down.

'Oh shi-' Joe jumped to his left, narrowly dodging the hit. The Hunter picked its arm up and slowly walked towards Joe. All the while, David, Josh and Brittany opened fire on it but it had no affect. Joe stood up, leaving his DMR on the ground. As bullets continued to ping off its armor, the Hunter pulled back its shield arm. It threw the arm forward in a thrust, but Joe rolled around the arm. He pulled out one of his knives and jumped towards the Hunter, he slashed at its head, cutting through half of its 'neck'. It stumbled backwards, stunned.

Joe turned to Josh. "Railgun!" He yelled, the latter threw the weapon to Joe. He caught it, began to charge up a shot, and aimed it at the Hunter's head. It fired, knocking the head clean off. For good measure, Joe took the rest of his grenades and shoved them in the creature's exposed torso. The grenades blew meat chunks and blood out every exposed area in the Hunter's armor. The upper part of the Hunter fell forward into the sand, the lower half remained in their fixed position.

Joe picked up his DMR, walked over to Josh, and gave him back his weapon. "Thanks for letting me use this." He said before pacing towards Brittany, he looked at David as he went, the latter was kicking the still standing corps of the Hunter he killed.

Joe looked back to Brittany. "Call it in." He said, continuing past her to check on the two Marines at the base of the hill.

Brittany activated the comm link, giving Miller the good news.

"Area clear Miller, unless you or Dalton see anymore Phantoms coming toward us."

"That's a negative," Spartan Dalton answered. "You're clear Crimson."

"Roger that Dalton," Spartan Miller cut it. "Your ride is inbound Crimson. Hold position, it'll come to you."

Meanwhile, David finally managed to make the Hunter armor to fall, he quickly moved around it, stood on top of the Hunter corps, and took a triumphant pose. "Quick someone take a picture!" Josh moved in front

of him and pretended have a camera, moving around as if he was taking pictures multiple angles. Playing along, David kept changing poses. Brittany laughed as the two fooled around.

Joe reached the bottom of the hill where the two Marines where, the Marine Sniper was jogging over to meet them. Joe bet down, he looked over the wounded Marine. It looked like he'll make it. The Sergeant sat up. "Well, it's not perfect but it'll do." He pulled the wounded man up. The Sniper Marine ran over and assisted. Together they pulled the Marine up the hill, a Pelican could be seen in the sky coming closer and closer.

Joe started up the hill again, wanting to join his team as they waited for their ride. A few moments later, the Pelican landed on the hill.

Crimson let the Marines in first before heading in themselves. Joe was the last one to enter, he looked back as he walked up the ramp. 'This wasn't such a bad first mission for Crimson team.' He thought to himself with a smile. He turned around and settled inside the Pelican. The ramp closed behind him as the dropship took off towards the sky and back to _Infinity_.

As they went, Miller came back on the comm channel.

"Commander Palmer, mission successful. Crimson's heading for home."

"Already?" She sounded surprised. "Everyone else is hip deep in bad guys. Impressive work Miller, congratulation the team."

A few moments of silence passed before Miller came back on again.

"Well Crimson, I've never heard Commander Palmer compliment anyone before, so not a bad day at the office. See you back on Infinity."

Joe chuckled to himself, almost two full squads of Marines died in this battle, David almost blew up everyone _again_, and he was almost chopped in half by a very pissed off Hunter. 'And he calls it, not a bad day at the office.'

Joe took off his helmet, wiped some sweat off his forehead, and dangled it between his legs.

"I assume the first rounds on you then."

3. Something Tougher

UNSC_ Infinity_, Requiem High Orbit February 8, **2558**

* * *

><p>Crimson team waited in one of the many briefing rooms aboard Infinity. Joe lead against a wall, Brittany was telling Josh one of her war stories, and David was pacing around the room, not out of patience but out of boredom. A few minutes pasted before the door slid open, Commander Palmer strolled right in.

"Hello Crimson." She said as she stood in front of the large table in the room, Crimson team snapped to attention. Palmer looked over the Spartan team, noting that Joe still had his armor on. She had to have a talk with him concerning the matter after the mission she was sending them on.

"At ease." She said, the members of Crimson relaxed but gave the Spartan Commander their full attention. "We're giving you something a little tougher today." As she talked, images flashed behind her. These images were satellite imagery of a particular region on the continent Operation LAND GRAB was taking place.

"We're sending you into a Covenant held area the Marines have been throwing themselves against to no avail." Palmer said as images of Storm forces flash on the screen behind her. "Clear this area of Covies and the entire continent more or less comes under our control, or in simple terms: If it moves, shoot it." David and Josh smiled, they wouldn't argue with orders like that.

Brittany raised her hand, Palmer nodded at the Spartan. "Ma'am, what's the point of entry?" Brittany asked, Palmer gestured to the screen behind her. It now showed images of an elaborate tunnel system, Forerunner design no less. "Last time Infinity came to this planet, we discovered a tunnel system that runs through most of this continent, and perhaps much of the whole planet." Palmer looked at Brittany. "This, Spartan Brittany, will be Crimson team's entry point. You leave in thirty minutes."

The images flashed off, as the briefing had concluded. Commander Palmer turned to leave. "Thanks to you Spartans hard work, most of the other Spartan teams who had a hand in the operation yesterday have a 'field day' today. Running through the War Game simulations, seeing as they have some decent competition."

Joe chuckled. "Those childish video games? The other teams will need more than that to reach the standard set before them." Palmer smirked, she looked at Crimson team's squad leader. "And who said that Crimson was the one setting that standard?" Joe smirked right back at her. "Who indeed?" The two stared at each other for a few moments, trying to read the other's thoughts.

Palmer let out a short laugh, she turned towards the door and left the room, wishing Crimson team luck on their mission. As she left, David walked over to Joe. He nudged the latter's shoulder. "You got some guts going toe to toe with the likes of her, Captain." Joe shrugged. "Yeah well, when you've worked with ONI for as long as I have, you tend to think that you can get away with a great many things."

Joe pushed off against the wall he was leaning on, making his way towards the door as he gestured for the rest of Crimson to follow.

* * *

><p>1 hour later, location designated: SNIPER ALLEY.

"Got eyes on one." Josh said, pointing his Battle Rifle at a nearby Storm Grunt. "Roger, take him out quietly." Joe said as he gestured Brittany and David to follow. The three of them flanked Josh as he

approached the unsuspecting Grunt.

Josh placed his BR on his back and pulled out a combat knife as he tiptoed closer to his target. He got as close as one could get before yanking back on the Grunt's methane filled backpack and stabbing the alien in the throat. The Unggoy twitched a few times before dying, Josh let the body down gently and moved quietly towards his teammates.

Joe turned his head, nodding at Josh as he fell into formation. "I see 3 more tangos on this level, all Grunts." He said over the team frequency. "Brittany, David and myself will take care of them. Josh, you keep us covered." The rest of Crimson team acknowledged, moving to carry out the order.

"Keep an eye on those Shades." Joe pointed to the two turrets overlooking the area, the gunners weren't looking their way now, but that could change at any moment.

Brittany placed her BR gently on the ground and paced over to her target, managing to remain silent until she stood right behind the Grunt. She tapped his shoulder, causing him to turn around. "Hi there." Brittany said, before the Grunt could react she napped his neck. His body fell with a light _thump_.

Joe reached his target, he reached for both of his combat knives hidden in his armor's shoulder pads. He flipped the blades around so that they would come out at the bottom of his hands and stabbed the Grunt in his temples, or at least where the temples would be on a human. Joe withdrew his knives, the Storm Grunt fell with a thump as he placed the knives back in place.

David tiptoed toward the last Grunt on this level, he unslinged his Assault Rifle, held it by its vertical grip, and moved it behind his head as if it were a baseball bat. "Fore!" David yelled, making the Grunt turn around just in time to catch the butt of the rifle with his face. The Grunt flew down and crashed into a Jackal on the lower level.

"I believe that's a hole in one!" David said as he flipped his rifle back around and started firing on the Covenant below. Brittany soon joined in, followed by Josh as they suppressed the enemy with bullets. Joe unslinged his DMR and shot the gunners of the two Shade turrets, satisfied that none of the other Covenant troops would make a break for the turrets, he joined in the all shooting frenzy David started.

"Next time, you could be a little more subtle." Joe said as he worked his way towards the center of the platform they were on. David laughed in response as he reloaded his rifle.

Just as Crimson just about finished mopping up the Covies in the area, a Ranger-class Elite jet-jumped up to the platform. He fired his Storm Rifle at Josh, who was the closest one to the Sangheili. The latter was caught by surprise by the Elite and backpedaled as plasma fire hit him quickly draining his shields.

Josh whirled his BR towards the Elite, about to fire when a combat knife flew past his head and impacted on the Ranger, piercing through the alien's shields and into his head. The Elite paused, his hand

twitched as he tried to grab the knife before falling to the ground. Josh turned around, surprised to see that Joe was the one who threw the knife. The latter walked passed Josh, retrieved his knife, put it back in his shoulder pad, and walked back towards Josh.

As he passed, Joe patted Josh's shoulder, saying nothing as he and Brittany walked down to the lower level. David walked over to Josh, placing the latter in a hold as he rubbed his fist back and forth on Josh's helmet; the closest thing to a nuggy that one could give a Spartan in full armor.

Josh broke out of David's hold. "What's the big idea?" He said, demanding to know why David did such a thing. David smirked, but Josh couldn't tell due to his visor. "Captain just saved your life for the first time, what I did was initiation to the club."

"I could have handled that Elite!" Josh claimed, thinking that David was calling him helpless. David shrugged. "Maybe you could have, but the Captain decided to intervene so it counts." David walked pasted his squadmate, gesturing him to follow. Joe and Brittany waited for them among the dead bodies scattered around, mostly Grunt with the occasional Jackel and one or two Elites. Neither asked why the two were delayed.

"Miller," Joe said, breaking the silence as he called for the Spartan over the comms. "We have a shield door blocking our path, any ideas on how to take it down?"

"One moment..." Miller responded. "Power source coming from this terminal, might be the shield controls. Setting waypoint now." A blip appeared Crimson team's visors, it pointed to a terminal on a raised platform right behind them. "Thanks Miller." Joe said, he pointed a David. "Go press the button. Brittany, Josh; get on those Shades and mow down any Covies that come through."

The members of Crimson hoped to their assigned positions. Joe followed David to the terminal and took cover behind a Forerunner designed wall. He looked at Brittany, then Josh, confirming the two where in position. David looked at Joe, the latter looked right back and nodded, giving his cue to lower the shield. David pressed the button and, with a rumble, the shield fell.

The area beyond was filled with twice as many Covenant as the first, mostly Grunts though. A few moments after the shield fell, all of the Grunts-lead by one Warrior class Elite and several Jackals- charged at Crimson team. Brittany and Josh opened fire, the commandeered Shade turrets mowed down Covenant left and right.

David still stood by the terminal, firing into the charging enemies when he felt it necessary, or if they fired at him first. Joe scanned the enemy horde but held his fire, they're was no need to add to this turkey shoot.

Suddenly, a Carbine round singed past his helmet. He looked up, there where several Jackal Snipers on the platform in front of him. Joe aimed his rifle and in quick succession shot each of them. When he was done, the Covenant's assault force was wiped out. Brittany and Josh hoped out of the Shades and joined Joe and David as they stepped through the remains of the mostly Grunt bodies.

As they walked through the mess, Miller came over the comms. "The shield ahead of you is being powered by two terminals. Marking them now." Joe pointed towards to the upper platform. "David, Josh: Up top. Brittany, you're with me." Brittany and Joe walked over to the terminal on their level. Joe held his hand out, offering Brittany the all important task of pressing a button.

David and Josh walked up to the platform, a surviving Jackal Sniper fired it Carbine at the two. David charged at the Jackal and tackled it off the platform. It impacted on the ground below, breaking its spin. The Jackal twitched wildly, suffering through the pain it was now experiencing. Josh leaned over the edge, pulled out his Magnum, and put the Kig-Yar out of his misery.

Josh holstered his pistol and walked pasted David. "That still counts as mine." The latter said. "Sure it does." Josh responded as he reached the terminal, pressing the button soon after. Much like the 1st, the shield fell with a rumble. Nearby Storm Jackals walked over to investigate the cause of the event.

David and Josh joined Brittany and Joe by their terminal just before the shield fell. Crimson team scanned at the area beyond the shield door, various equipment laid around, its purpose unknown. "It appears to be-One moment." Miller said, cutting himself off as he checked something.

"Looks like they're siphoning power from the structures." Brittany answered, causing the rest of Crimson to stare at her. "That's...Exactly right." Miller said. "How did you?" Brittany shrugged. "I've seen my fair share of Covenant dig sights and such, so I can tell the general purpose of them just by looking."

"Right." Josh said. "And do you happen to know _why_ they're doing this?" Brittany shrugged again in an 'I don't know' way. "We have more pressing matters now." Joe said, regaining their attention and focusing it towards the bridge in front of them. Jackals were crossing it now and they would see them any second. "Besides, that sort of thing is more up Spartan Miller's alley anyway."

Joe pointed to the ramp leading towards the bridge. "David, Brittany: Post here. Fire when you're ready. Josh you're with me, we'll come at them from the other approach." Josh and Joe sprinted to the other side as David and Brittany out into position. David took out a frag grenade, Brittany nodded and pulled out one as well. They threw their grenades at the incoming enemy, the resulting explosion left 3 Jackals dead. David and Brittany open fire on the remaining Jackals.

By the time Joe and Josh came around for the other side, only one Jackal remained on the bridge, but an Elite leading a squad of four Grunts as well as several more Jackal were approaching. "Fire." Joe said in his zero zen sniper tone of voice. The following fire fight lasted a few minutes as Crimson exchanged fire with the Storm rebels in a heat of bullets and plasma rounds. When the last Covie fell, Joe ordered Crimson to advance onto the bridge.

They maneuvered over the fallen as they made it to the other side. Joe looked at the enemy equipment. "Dave, do your thing." David took out a can of C7 and began to place it on the equipment.

"Brittany, Josh advance. I'll cover you from here." Brittany and Josh did as they were told. Walking a few feet onto the sand covered rock surface, looking for the slightest sign of enemy presence when a 4-man drop pod landed a little ways away. Four Elites jumped out of the pod, soon spotting the two Spartans and charged at them.

Brittany and Josh fired on them with their BRs, Joe fired from afar taking down one of the Elites before the others were upon his comrades.

One dropped his weapon and grabbed Josh's Battle Rifle. Josh wrestled with the Elite for control of the weapon, both pulled and pushed back and forth in a deadlock. Meanwhile, Brittany managed to take down one of the others with Joe's help and dealing with the third. She pulled the trigger of her BR. _ Click! Click!_ Empty.

Brittany shifted the rifle to her left hand and ejected the empty magazine. The Sangheili took this chance to close in on the Spartan, but that's what she wanted him to do. When the Elite was close enough, she unslinged her second weapon: a M45D Tactical Shotgun. She shoved the shotgun barrel into the Sangheili's face and pulled the trigger, blowing most of the Elite's head off. Welding it one handed, the recoil was a bit more uncontrolled but managed by the Spartan.

Brittany looked at Josh, the latter was still wrestling with his opponent. Placing the BR on her back, Brittany pumped another round in the shotgun's chamber, walked closer to the two, and fired at the Elite, killing him. Josh shrugged the dead Elite off, he looked at Brittany. "I didn't need help."

The latter leaned her shotgun on her shoulder. "Sure." She said before turning towards the approaching Spartan Joe. "David's done?" Brittany asked, Joe pointed behind him. Not one second later, a massive explosion followed by a familiar laughter filled their suits audio receptors. "Dave's done." Joe said.

After waiting for David to catch up, Crimson team moved onward through the rocky terrain. In an enclosed area beyond where a decent number of Grunts, a few Jackals, and one Elite. Joe and David took the high ground and fired on the Covenant below, Josh and Brittany followed down the path and fired on them as they tried to counterattack.

During the firefight, David discarded his Assault Rifle and pulled out the two M7 Submachine guns he had on his legs, mowing down many Grunts with his increased rate of fire. Once every single Covenant seemed to lay dead in that area, a single drop pod slammed into the ground. Jumping out of the pod was a Elite Zealot armed with an Energy Sword.

Despite the appearance of this formidable foe, he was soon overwhelmed by Crimson team's fire power. Joe was the first to walk over to the dead Zealot and nudged it with his boot. "Well isn't that flattering." He said. "Storm sent one of their trained SpecOp operatives after us."

Josh, Brittany and David joined their leader as he continued to explain what he meant "In the Storm faction, Zealots are members of

the group's leadership and handle special operation missions." Joe looked at his team. "This means that we've officially made their hit-list." Josh put his free hand up in the air and twirled it around. "Hooray for us." He said sarcastically.

Crimson team moved onto the next area, it was a wide open area with little natural cover.(As in spread out not size.) Many Grunts and Jackals littered the place, but not a single Elite to be seen. Joe spotted a Covenant sniper tower with two Jackals on top, he eliminated them first, signaling the rest of his team to open fire.

As the battle began, three hybrids of a drop ship and a drop pod came down from the sky, dropping off reinforcements -including several Elites- and flew off out of sight.

"Dalton, mind sending Crimson some ordnance?" Miller requested over the comms. "On it's way now Miller." Dalton responded. As he finished three small pods impacted near Crimson team, they were ordnance pods fired from _Infinity_ containing a Railgun, an SRS99-S5 AM, and a Rocket Launcher.

"Help yourselves boys." Joe said as he placed his DMR on his back and went for the sniper, David grabbed the launcher and Josh the Railgun. Joe climbed up on the large rock behind them, went prone when he found a suitable spot, and began to fire with his sniper. David fired his first rocket at a far off Shade turret, the gunner was either blind or stupid as he had plenty of time to jump to safety but chose not to as the rocket hit it and him.

Brittany and Josh moved out in the open and into a creator far back from the Covenant. This made them run out in the open to try and hit the Spartans, which made them all the more easier to pick off. A few more minutes into the battle, a group of Grunts entered the sniper tower and fired wildly at Crimson, but all this did was make them a target for David's last rocket.

Brittany loaded her last mag for her BR. "This makes a great improvised trench." She said as she continued to fire at the incoming Covenant. "No kidding." Josh said as he fired his last Railgun round into an Elite, the latter grasped at the newly formed hole in his chest before falling over dead.

David ran full speed towards the crater Josh and Brittany where in, still wielding the empty Rocket Launcher and one of his SMGs. He fired at a nearby Elite and threw the empty launcher at him, stunning the Sangheili as he fell thanks to Joe who switched back to his DMR. David pulled out his other SMG and fired as he ran to his comrades. "Mind if I join you?" He said as he slid into the crater, soon joining the two in suppressing the remaining Covenant.

The battle raged for a few more minutes, all of the Storm members fell either to David, Josh, and Brittany's hailstorm of bullets or Joe's sniping. Crimson team now surveyed the battlefield, making sure there where no survivors.

"Crimson," Miller came back on comms "I'm reading a power fluctuation in your area. Looks like this device is sending power to other nearby Covenant held areas." The Ops operator marked said device on Crimson team's visors. "Need you to mark it with a beacon so Dalton can have

his boys blow it."

"Roger." Joe responded. "David, since you've been on a roll with explosives today, you do the honors." David saluted him and happily went off to do the job. In a matter of moments, David planted the beacon and sprinted back to the rest of his team. Together, they watched as a Broadsword fighter-bomber blew its target to hell.

Joe patted David's shoulder. "So how does it feel to watch someone else's work?" David chuckled "It could use something more. There's no flare or essence in that performance." Joe let out a short laugh. "Well you do see explosions as an art."

"Target destruction confirmed." Miller said over the comms. "Pelican inbound, great job Crimson."

Joe chuckled. "Easy day Miller. Crimson out."

* * *

><p>OK so just a little note on this glorious 3rd entry. As you may have figured out by now, these "interpretations" of SPARTAN OPS missions don't cover word for word everything that actually happened. Mainly for the purpose of better portraying realization, cause Commander Palmer hangs around Crimson team like a vulture with her input. I can understand during certain missions but EVERY SINGLE ONE. It's like does she have nothing better to do?

Also any weapons that existed in the Halo universe are susceptible of showing up in this.

4. The Challenge & Spartan Poker Night

Requiem, "The Fortress" 15:08 February 9, **2558**

* * *

><p>Crimson team took their first steps on the snow covered ground, the Pelican dropship that gave them a lift here flew off into the horizon. Spartan Joe scanned the sight below; amongst the snow covered mountains was a Forerunner structure, the reason why Crimson was deployed here was thanks to this installation.<p>

He heard footsteps coming from behind, he turned around and saw David approaching. The Spartan stopped directly behind him. "Can you explain to me again why we're here Captain?" Joe pointed at the installation below them. "That shiny little place there is why. Apparently, it's acting as a power relay for Covenant bases all around Requiem." Joe looked at David. "There are several installations like this in the region. We're gonna shut this one down while Majestic team shuts down another Command found."

Josh joined them. "Word is Majestic won against Castle in the War Game simulations, so Demarco probably a bit confident right now." Joe chuckled, he looked at Josh. "Commander Palmer did suggest that our two teams have a friendly competition. Which team can shut off their installation first."

Brittany strolled over to the rest of Crimson, she hefted her SAW on

her shoulder. "Perfect chance to show off to Majestic. What do you say sir?" Joe looked at Brittany, then back at the structure below. He smiled. "Let the game begin." He jumped off the ledge and slid down the mountain side towards the Forerunner installation. The rest of Crimson followed close behind, landing on the ground with a thump.

Crimson team was right in front of their target now, on a ledge overlooking the front side. Joe and Josh paced over to the edge, scanning the area. "Seems a bit empty." Josh said, not realizing that this base was guarded by Prometheans; Forerunner AIs that can warp into any area they wished. Just as Josh finished speaking, several Promethean Crawlers warped into the area and began firing at the Spartans.

"You were saying?" Joe said as the two of them returned fire. Despite the element of surprise, the firefight ended rather quickly as David and Brittany joined their teammates only to look at the blown up remains of the Crawlers. "So these guys explode when you kill them." David said, more as a statement than a question. "Neat."

"Brittany, David, have a look around." Joe commanded the two. As they moved out, Joe decided to give Miller a call. "Miller, we're at the target installation and encountered enemy resistance. Mind telling us how exactly to shut this thing off?" A few moments passed, nothing happened. "Hello? Miller? Do you read?" Silence.

Joe looked at Josh. "Comms are down, not sure on the source of the interference." Josh sighed. "Typical Op, going wrong from the start. I'll see if I can find the jammer." Josh hoped of the edge, informed Brittany and David on the comm interference, and had them help find the source.

David walked by a Forerunner tower looking device, passing it entirely. "If I where a jamming device, where would I be?" He backup a few steps, leaning his hand on the control pad of the device behind him as he thought of where the device would be. Unknown to him at the time, he found and already deactivated the jammer.

"Crimson!" Miller's voice came over the comms. "Can you hear me? I lost yours and Majestic's comm signals." Joe laughed, since he saw David's unintentional success. "Good to hear from you Miller. There was a comm jammer but we deactivated it." Joe said as David backed away from the jamming device, looked at it, then his hand, then back at the device.

"Roger, I'm sending you the locations of your first targets." Two orange blips showed on Crimson team's visors. "Watch out though," Miller continued. "There are Prometheans guarding that area." "We've already been acquainted." Joe said, resting his DMR on a nearby boulder. "Alright Crimson, take that point in front of us. I'll provide cover from here then join up with you to hit the second."

Brittany, Josh, and David moved towards the 1st target which Josh on point. As they went up the path, more Crawlers warped in on the rocks above them. By the time the majority of Crimson could react, Joe opened fire and downed two, but the rest pounced on his team. David caught one by its mouth pieces and pulled it apart. Josh caught another with one hand, pushed it away, and finished it with a burst

of his BR. Brittany managed to intercept her Crawler with a hail of bullets.

Joe was about to say something when Miller cut him off. "Majestic just deactivated the 1st target and moving on to the second. Show some hustle if you want to beat them." Brittany lifted her SAW up. "Well you heard the man! Let's get going!" Josh, David, and Brittany reached the location of the 1st target: It was a small building surrounded by walls on most sides. Before they moved any further, a portal appeared above them and out of it came several Promethean Watchers.

The little floating Prometheans opened fire on the three as they moved around every which way. However, with support from Joe, the Watchers were easily dealt with. Josh walked up the side of the building and pressed the terminal control. Miller confirmed that the device had shut off.

"One down." Joe muttered to himself before jumping off the ledge and began to run over to his team. "I'm moving to join you now." He said. "And Miller? You mind patching me to Majestic, particularly Demarco?" A few moments passed, by the time Miller responded Joe had reached the rest of his team. "Done, though I can assume why you're asking for this which is why I hesitated for a few."

"Thanks Miller." Joe looked at his team, he signaled them to advance towards the second target. "Hey Demarco." Joe said, seeing if Miller wasn't pulling a fast one on them. "Who is this?" Demarco's voice came over the comm. "Crimson? That you?" Joe smirked. "The name's Joe and yes, I lead Crimson team. I heard from Dave that you've been talking about me when I'm not around. I thought we could have a little discussion on that." A few moments passed before Demarco responded. "Ah...A bit busy at the moment. Maybe later."

As Joe's conversation with Demarco continued, another portal appeared above the target building dropping out several more Watchers. "Bastards just love coming out of thin air!" David yelled as he fired on the new arrivals. Joe, Josh and Brittany fired on the Prometheans as well, all the while Joe continued his conversation with Demarco.

"Of course. So how's Majestic handling things right now?"

"Oh you know, having a discussion with the locals."

"Same here, only we're about finished. And by the way, we're gaining on you."

And with that, Joe shut off the comm link. Crimson team mopped up the remaining Watchers and deactivated the device. "Good job Crimson." Miller said over the comms. "Marking the last target for you now." A blip showed up on Crimson's visors, it was at the top of the tallest building in the center of the complex.

With a gesture of his hand, Joe ordered his squad towards it. Upon entering, they were greeted by three Crawlers who were gunned down easily. After reaching the second level, a mixture of Watchers and Crawlers engaged Crimson. Though outnumbered, Crimson team mowed down the Prometheans in their path and made their way to the third floor. David walked over to the terminal and, while trying to be as dramatic

as possible, pressed the button, shut down the relay system.

Miller came over the comms. "Confirming third target down, Crimson team has shut down all systems at their tower." "Excellent work Crimson." Commander Palmer's voice came over the comms. "Looks like you won this round." "Oh come on!" Demarco complained. "Crimson couldn't have had the defenses ours had!" Palmer was the first to respond. "You're right Demarco, Crimson had more to deal with than you."

Joe smirked inside his helmet, Brittany and Josh highfived, and David did a little dance while singing an old 21st century song known as "Harder, Better Faster, Stronger." As Crimson team celebrated in their own ways, Miller sent them the coordinates to where their ride was going to pick them up. As Crimson made their way to the LZ, Josh and David gloated over the team's easy victory.

"Now that was too easy!"

"Showed Majestic how its done!"

"Demarco will be raging for weeks."

"The guy deserves it! So full of himself, he deserves to be taken down a peg or two."

"An't that the truth."

Just then, as if an act of vengeance or a last ditch effort, a large number of Promethean Crawlers and Watchers warped in behind Crimson team. Joe was the first to noticed the large amount of contacts on his motion sensor, he spun around and fired on the nearest Crawler. The act prompted the rest of Crimson to action, quickly turning around and firing at the Prometheans. The firefight lasted for ten minutes, though it seemed much longer.

David was shifting through the remains of the AIs, picking up what he though were weapons. He was surprised when he reached out to one it would break apart and reform in his hands. "Captain! You have to try this out!" David waved to Joe, a Boltshot in his hands "These weapons form in you hands when you reach out to them!"

"Oh really? Why don't you grab a few for R&R?" Joe called back.

"Maybe they can reverse engineer it so our weapons can do that. Might as well keep some for yourself do, considering they're all over the damn place." David saluted in response and began to pick up as many of the Promethean weapons as he could hold.

After a few more moments, Crimson team's Pelican arrived at the LZ. The back ramp opened up, Joe looked back at Josh, Brittany, and the approaching David caring one too many weapons in his hands.

"Let's get back to the ship." Joe said with a smile "After all, it's Poker Night."

* * *

><p>UNSC Infinity, 18:24 Feburary 9, 2558

>

It was Poker Night aboard Infinity, a monthly occurrence among other activities held on the ship for the benefit of the crew. The Spartans were no exception to this, as Crimson among other Spartan fireteams gathered in one of the areas hosting the event.

"Are you looking at my cards?!" Joe yelled to a Marine setting besides him, surprising the man.

Most people that knew him aboard Infinity knew that this was the Spartan's usually routine during a poker game in the hopes of adding some comedy into the serious atmosphere. Needless to say, it was usually successful.

"No I'm not!"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes! I wouldn't cheat a Spartan."

"If you're lying to me-"

"I'm not lying!"

Joe slammed his cards on the table as he stood up, everyone who knew the act snickered as they waited for the best part. "I used to drop down through a planet's atmosphere riding in a glorified tin can just to shoot aliens for a living! I will NOT hesitate to jump across this table and bitchslap you for looking at my cards!"

"I'm telling you I'm not looking at your cards!"

"You sure?!"

"Positive!"

Joe pointed his index and middle fingers at his eyes then towards the Marine before sitting down. As he did, those who knew it was a joke-David included- laughed hysterically. The Marine who was the victim of the prank, as well as those who didn't know it was a joke, looked around at the ones laughing as they wondered what was so funny.

At that moment, Joe gave the Marine a squeeze. "Ah don't worry mate, I'm just messing with ya." He let the Marine go and patted him on the shoulder. Joe looked to Brittany and Josh. "It's a bit of an inside joke I've been known to do at poker games. The people laughing right now have are those who have seen it before." He pointed to David who was trying to calm himself down. "This guy especially."

"It's still funny, every time." David said when he managed to calm himself. He looked at Brittany and Josh "So now you know."

Several minutes passed as the room managed to quiet down and the games continued as everyone tried not to lose all their money.

The door to the room opened, revealing two members of Majestic team: Hoya and Madsen. The Spartans walked through the door, moving around full tables when they stopped at the table Crimson was at. Hoya was the first to sit at the table. "Have room for one more?" Brittany

smiled. "Sure big guy. We could use some fresh blood."

"Especially since I keep losing my money to these assholes." Josh added in, pointing to David and Joe. Hoya laughed. "I'll be sure to watch my money around you two." Joe let out a short laugh. "Even if you do that, I'll still take your money."

Joe looked at Madsen "Care to join us?" Madsen shrugged. "I don't know, I hate to lose to you guys twice in one day." David gestured for the Spartan to join them. "Come, come, sit down! Come lose your money, I can always use more." Brittany smirked. "Looks like David here is calling you a poor poker player. You gonna let him get away with that Madsen?"

Madsen smiled. "Well now it looks like I have to join now so I can prove you wrong." He pulled out a chair and sat at the table. As Joe dealt out the cards, he decided to start a conversation with the two Majestic members.

"So where's the rest of you're team?"

"Well Demacro's off being Demarco." Madsen answered. "He's pretty mad at losing to you today. Throne said he's not much of a poker player and Grant's off doing something. I didn't really pay attention."

"Yeah," Hoya cut in. "But that's because you were starting at other women again."

"You know me so well Hoya. You know me so well." Madsen stared back at Joe. "I've been meaning to ask, but why do you wear your armor all the time?"

"It's a habit I picked up from the war." Joe finished dealing at this time, he looked at his cards before continuing. "Long story short, I've survived a bad experience that resulted in half the crew of a ship I was on at the time to be wiped out because they weren't prepared."

Madsen nodded, he understood that type of situation but not personally. A few minutes pasted in the game before David brought something up. "So how's that Grant member of yours?"

"She's alright, I guess." Hoya answered, a bit confused by the question. "Why d'you ask?"

"Dave here's been wanting to make a move on her for some time now." Joe answered.

Hoya and Brittany looked at David, half in pity half in amazement. Josh and Madsen broke out in laughter. "Dude, she'll kick your ass!" Madsen said in between laughs.

"Which is what I've been trying to tell him from the beginning." Joe looked at David. "The man just doesn't listen to reason sometimes."

David responded by flipping the bird, to which Joe responded in kind.

And for the majority of that night, the Spartans of Crimson and Majestic teams continued to play poker as most of them most more money than they gained.

* * *

><p>OK, so this mission wasn't that amazing so I didn't waste much time on it. I mean, it was pretty easy when I played it.

Hope you enjoyed that Poker Night bit, get a little look at Joe when he's off duty.(And an actual inside joke I have with some of my poker playing buddies)

5. Jungle Attraction

UNSC Infinity, February 10, 2558

* * *

><p>In a familiar breifing room aboard the UNSC Infinity, Crimson team laid in wait for their new _special_ assignment. What was special about this particular mission, to what Crimson and several other Spartan squads knew, was that Commander Palmer specifically requested Crimson team for the job.

"Think we got this for showing off yesterday?" Josh said as he walked over to Joe, the latter was leaning against the wall. "I wouldn't doubt it." He said, letting out a slight sigh. "Demarco's one of those soldiers that COs love to pick on. Since we embarrassed him, this mission might be our 'reward'."

David, who was spinning around in a chair at the time, let out a short laugh. "Our reward? I hope we get deployed somewhere with a beach." Joe smiled. "And the bitches, don't forget the bitches." Brittany shrugged her arms. "And what does that make me?" Josh stared at her with a smirk, Joe did a facepalm to hide that fact that he was chuckling. He knew what was coming next.

David stopped spinning, sat up, and slowly paced over to Brittany. "Well, if you feel that way I can-" SLAP! Brittany glared at David. "Its a joke, sawd off." David rubbed the side of his face. "Damn! I was just kidding!" Joe and Josh broke out in laughter.

"Serves you right, yea jerk!" Josh said in between his laughs. David spun around, about to say something when Commander Palmer entered the room. "I hope I'm not interrupting anything." Joe smiled at the Commander. "Nothing special ma'am. Just the usual standard operating procedure."

"I see." Palmer paced inward, stopping and turning so the screen in the room was behind her. "First off, good work showing Majestic team how its done." She smirked. "Demarco'll be mad at that for days." As she said this, Josh bumped his shoulder against Joe, quietly saying "Told yeah."

"Next," Palmer continued. "You four most be wondering why I personally requested this team. Well, I need a fireteam I can depend on and until you prove otherwise, you're it." Brittany and David

smiled, Josh nodded in approval, Joe crossed his arms and smirked.

'Of course we are.' He thought. 'This is what happens when you form a Spartan team with two ex-ODSTs, one of which specializes in covert operations, an ex-Army trooper who's damn good with a SAW, and an ex-Marine who happens to be an explosive nut.'

"So here's the job I have for you Crimson." Palmer said. "Infinity Science has identified a jungle structure they want to see up close. I want boots on the ground before the eggheads go poking at every shiny object they find." She paused for a few moments before continuing. "The structure is connected to that tunnel network you traveled through before, so huff it there and secure it. You leave in five."

"You heard the Commander!" Joe said, uncrossing his arms as he walked towards the door. "Gear up and lets go."

* * *

><p>2 minutes later. UNSC Infinity
S-Deck, Armory**

Crimson team was at work sorting through various equipment trying to pick what gear they should bring for this mission.

"I think I'll go with a BR this time..." Joe mumbled to himself before grabbing said item and several clips. "Maybe two Magnums or a Detonator." He though on that for a few moments, imaging how both choices would affect him in what he thought would be a close to mid wide facility and decided on the Sticky Detonator.

As he grabbed the weapon and several extra grenades he heard David call out to him. "Hey Captain! You think I should bring some explosives?" Joe holstered the Detonator and placed the grenades on his belt. "I don't think we need explosives for his mission, but you can bring some if you want." David responded with a "Yessir" before grabbing several cans of C7.

After another minute, everyone was satisfied with they selection and ready to go: Josh had a Railgun and a Magnum, Brittany had a SAW and a Shotgun, David with a BR and two SMG, everyone had several frag grenades on their belts as well as ample clips of ammunition.

Joe lead Crimson team out, they walked down the long winding corridors when Demarco called out to them, specifically Joe. The latter told the rest of his team to go on ahead. After waiting for his team to leave, Joe walked over to the leader of Majestic.

"What's up Demarco? You're not going to use me to vent some frustration are you?"

Demarco let out a short, sad laugh. "Not really. Crimson heading out today?"

"Yeah, we're gonna check out some jungle facility Science wants to poke around in. Make sure its secure before giving the the green light."

Demarco nodded. "Uh, I heard Palmer requested you guys for that op."

"Yep. Our reward for showing you guys how its done yester- Er, I mean."

"It's fine, you can say it. You kicked our asses yesterday and now your team's Palmer's personal errand runners."

Joe chuckled. "I guess that's one way of looking at it."

"I don't think I would've liked that job anyway. The Commander's got it out for me."

"You think it has anything to do with the fact that you tried to hit on her when you first came aboard?"

Demarco raised his eyebrow and smirked. "How did you-?"

"You're talking to a man who used to work for ONI. I know what's going around one way or another."

"Really? I didn't know that."

"There's a lot you don't know about me. Top secret know how, I'd have to kill you if I told you stuff. Typical ONI operative."

Demarco let out a short laugh. "Uh listen, I don't mean to hold you up for your important mission but they're something I have to say."

Joe looked at Demarco in particular interest. 'Here it is...'

"Just...Nice work yesterday." Joe raised his eyebrows in surprise, this was a bit uncharacteristic for Demarco.

"Yeah, you heard me right." Demarco patted Joe on the shoulder, turned around, and continued on his way to where ever the hell he was going.

After a few moments, Joe chuckled, turned around and jogged to make up for lost time. "Never though I'd see the day."

* * *

><p>20 minutes later "The Refuge." **Requiem February 10,** **2558**

A Forerunner door opened, Crimson team flooded into the revealed area. They scanned around, searching for enemies. With the immediate area clear, Joe lead his team forward into the structure. It was much, much wider than he imagined, especially since there wasn't a roof in the central area. Off to the left, it seemed that vegetation had started to overrun the place...or the facility was built into the vegetation or with the design of being overgrown with the stuff. Forerunners were weird like that sometimes, all with their hidden meanings and such.

"Looks quiet Captain." David said, lowering his weapon. "Might have the place to ourselves."

"Well we're here to make sure." Joe responded, keeping his weapon and gaze straight ahead. "Remember the Promethies we fought yesterday? They can warp in from anywhere, anytime. So stay sharp."

"Crimson?" Miller said over the comms. "I've detected a power fluctuation in the back corner of the facility. Someone's been here recently, and they left the lights on."

"Roger that Miller." Joe responded. "We'll take a look." Joe looked to Josh on his right. "Josh, your on point." The Spartan complied and lead the way as the rest of Crimson scanned around as they followed. David called out to Joe and pointed him to what looked like a weapon rack filled with Promethean weaponry. "Lots of shinny things in the gift shop Captain."

Joe looked without breaking his stride, the weapons looked like long rifles of some sort. "Maybe well take some souvenirs on the way out." He said.

Crimson team headed to the back corner of the facility, it seemed clear. Josh took two steps towards a nearby ramp when a single Crawler manifested ahead of him. "Contact!" He yelled before bringing up his rifle and shooting it. As he finished it off, more Crawlers teleported in and started firing at the Spartans

"And this is why we where sent in first." Joe said calmly as he along with the rest of his team opened fire on the dog looking Als. After a few moments, the Crawlers on the ground floor were dealt with. Josh was the first to go up the ramp into the second floor where he found two more Crawlers who soon meet the same fate as the others.

The rest of Crimson joined Josh and began to look around. Brittany stared at a what looked to be a map of some sort, Joe paced over to the map as Miller came over the comms. "That's the source there. It appears to be a star map. See if you can access the data."

"Roger." Joe looked at David and waved him over. "Seeing as you have the magic ability to find and activate buttons, you access the data."

"That was one time! One time!"

"I don't care, go find it! We'll watch for hostiles."

David walked passed the star map, mumbling to himself as he went. "Oh just because I accidentally pressed a button we needed to that automatically means I'm magical." David reached the end of the corridor and leaned on a segment of (wall?) that stood in the middle of the passage. "Although that wouldn't be a bad thing..." He said to himself as he placed his hand on the segment, again accidentally pressing a button that needed to be pressed.

"Now to find that button." David said as he pushed himself off the wall, about to continue his search when Miller spoke over the comms. "Uplink established, pulling data now." David raised his eyebrow, looked at the segment he was just leaning on, noticed the holopanel, then looked at his hand. "Well then..." He began to walk back towards

his teammates. "It official, I'M MAGICAL."

Josh laughed, about to respond when a Crawler warped in right next to him. "Hello!" He said as he quickly pulled out his Magnum and fired on the AI point blank. Three other Crawler popped up but where quickly dealt with by Brittany and Joe.

"Ok, I pulled all the data the map had to offer." Miller said over the comms. "Standby...OK Crimson, Commander Palmer says to pack up and leave. Marking your evac route now."

"Understood." Joe waved his arm around in a circle. "Let's head home Crimson."

As Crimson team headed back the way they came, several more Crawlers warped in and rushed at them. Joe popped three off before Brittany and David mopped up the rest.

The Spartans continued walking when something new warped in, a humanoid like thing with four arms; one attached to one of those Forerunner rifles Joe say earlier, one attached to a blade of some kind, and two small ones around its chest. It had a huge mushroom like thing latched on its back, and by all other accounts looked very Forerunner. Joe recognized it from an old report: A Promethean Knight

Josh was the first to speak "What the hell is-?"

"Take it down." Joe said calmly as he pulled out his Sticky Detonator. The Knight roared and disappeared into a small flash of light. The members of Crimson team looked around for any traces of the creature. "Stay sharp." Joe cautioned. "It can teleport in and out at will." Just as he finished speaking, the Knight warped in behind Brittany and swung his blade arm at her.

The latter, acting on instinct, managed to dodge the blow, spin around, and fired at the Knight. She was surprised to learn that unlike the other Promethean types they fought before, this one had shields.

"Get away!" Joe yelled, firing a Sticky Grenade towards the Knight as it prepared to swing his blade arm again. The grenade landed on it's head, interruption the second hit and allowing Brittany to back away. The moment she was out of the blast radius, Joe detonated the grenade, killing the Knight and causing its body to disintegrate into light particles.

"Look at that! They're self cleaning!" David said as he walked over to the glowing light that hovered where the Knight once was.

"Ha, makes body detail a bit more easy when fighting them eh?" Brittany said jokingly, she was completely unphased by her resent close encounter.

"What was that anyway? Another type of Promethean?" Josh asked.

Joe looked at him and nodded. "Promethean Knight. They're basically an equivalent to Sangheili warriors only more tricky to deal with. Thanks to their teleportation ability."

"Well isn't that a bitch." David said bluntly as he walked towards Joe.

"Why don't you use your magical powers to deal with them?" Josh said in a somewhat jackass way.

"My magic powers only work with buttons and explosives."

"That's what I mean, just blow them up."

"Do you know how to rip a hole in the space they go in when they teleport?"

"...No."

"Exactly, so shut up."

"Uh guys," Brittany cut in. "Look." She pointed to what Joe had well already seen. A large number of Crawlers and several Knights had warped in ahead of them and taken up firing positions.

Joe looked back at Josh and David. "If you two are done, we have some tangeros that need to be taught what it means to try and mess with us."

"Sounds good to me Capt'em." David replied before rushing off towards the enemy, BR blazing away. Josh looked at Joe with a puzzling look, of course the latter couldn't tell thanks to his helmet. Regardless, Joe knew the look (thanks to multiple encounters with the enemy with David and company in tow) and shrugged as a response before turning his attention to the Prometheans.

"Just gonna stand there?" Brittany said -more of an encouragement than a question- before rushing off to join David in his seemingly suicide charge. Josh lifted both his arms out at chest level. "Just who do you think I am?" He said before lowering his arms and joining in the fray.

These Prometheans fell like the rest, the only difficulty were the Knights due to the facts that they kept teleporting all about and that they spawned Watchers out of their mushroom looking backs who somehow revived other Knights that Crimson managed to put down. Fortunately, most of the Knights fell into a pattern when they teleported, tending to fall further back than advancing, and were soon dealt with accordingly.

With their foes defeated, Crimson team moved towards the exit. When they got close, the pathway closed. Josh threw his arms up in the air. "What the hell?"

Joe placed his left index and middle finger by his ear as he contacted Crimson's handler. "Miller, our path is blocked. What's going on?"

"The building's walls are moving! I can't explain what causing it, hold on I'll try to find a solution."

Joe moved his left hand over and did a facepalm. "Typical Forerunner tech. They always have to make their buildings alive."

David overheard the latter and commented. "Just when you think you left, they pull you right back in."

"An't that the truth." Brittany added.

"Crimson, I think I found the door controls." Miller said, much to Joe's relief. "Marking for you now."

The waypoint appeared on Crimson team's visors, pointing upward. The Spartans moved to the closest way up, Joe leading the way. As they went, 3 Crawlers plus a single Knight warped in front of them. Joe ignored the Crawlers, leaving them to the rest of his team, as he pulled out his Sticky Detonator and fired at the Knight.

The grenade stuck on its chest, the Knight fired his weapon in response but it wouldn't change his fate. Joe pulled his arm back, smirked, and detonated the grenade. As the Promethean's body disintegrated, Joe looked back to confirm that the Crawlers were dealt with. Satisfied, he and his team continued upward.

When they reached the top, a single Crawler and a Knight were waiting for them. The Knight looked a bit different than the others they seen as it had a different headpiece and some type of light rays coming out of its back. The two stayed back where the controls for the door were and stared at the Spartans, as if trying to burn into them with their looks alone.

David took two steps toward them but was stopped by Joe. "Let me handle this." He said as he pulled up his Sticky Detonator. He aimed for a spot in between the two Prometheans and fired. The grenade landed between the two who didn't flinch in the slightest. Waiting a few seconds to pull out his BR with his free hand, Joe detonated the grenade. The blast killed the Crawler and lowered the shields of the Knight, Joe fired his Battle Rifle one handed at the Promethean, finishing it off.

"Damn." David said in a satisfied manner.

"It makes a pretty good improvised mine planter." Joe said as he reloaded the Detonator then holstered it. "David. Button man. Go." The latter walked to the controls and pressed the button while making his own sound effect. A few sounds echoed through the room, indicating that the door had opened.(or at least that's what Crimson hoped.)

The Spartans doubled back, on the way David spotted a weapon that looked like a cannon but wasn't hollowed out on the inside. Meaning that if it was a cannon, it didn't fire any projectile rounds or at least rockets. The explosive expert snugged his BR and hefted the cannon up. Making their way down, about a dozen or more Crawlers warped in and opened fire.

Joe and Brittany returned fire, popping of Crawlers left and right. When they cut their numbers in half, three Knights warped in off to Crimson's left.

"Deal with them." Joe said to Josh and David as he and Brittany continued to fire on the Crawlers. Josh aimed his Railgun at a Knight and fired, the latter sidestepped at the last minute, returning fire as he fellow Knights open fire. Josh quickly reloaded and fired

again, hitting and killing a Knight this time. As he reloaded again, David aimed his new weapon and fired at the Knights, 5 red lights streaked towards the Prometheans-4 of which seemed to 'dance' as they went.

The 5 rays of light hit the ground, one exploded, causing the other 4 to bounce once and explode a little ways away, creating a massive particle like explosion that killed the two Knights. "Woow!" David squealed with excitement. "I like this new toy!" By the time the Knight were taken care of, Brittany and Joe managed to reduce the Crawlers numbers to nothingness.

Before anyone could say a word, more Prometheans appeared in the pathway out of here. "They just keep coming." Brittany said. "Persistent bastards, there's so much that a girl can take." Josh let out a small laugh. "Well why don't we tell them politely to back off?"

Crimson team engaged the enemy; David and Josh remained on the high ground while Brittany and Josh moved down to the lower level and fired on the Prometheans. Between Joe's sniping, Brittany filling every space with bullets, Josh's Railgun punching holes in the Knights disappearing bodies, and David's new explosive toy, the Prometheans never stood a chance.

"Clear!" Brittany yelled as the last enemy was dealt with.

"Finally!" Josh said, hefting his Railgun with one arm. "I thought they never stop coming." David and Joe walked over to the two. "That tends to happen when your enemy can manipulate space itself as a travel pathway." The latter said.

David began to wonder over to the rack of Forerunner rifles he spotted on the way in. "This has been the Forerunner jungle building attraction." He said as he began to pick up as many rifles as he could with one hand. "We hope you enjoyed killing all of our employees and wish you a marvelous day."

"Don't forget to stop by the gift shop on the way out." Joe added as he walked towards the exit. Followed by Brittany, Josh and later David who carried the Forerunner cannon in one hand and 3 or 4 rifles in the other.

* * *

><p>Uh this took longer to write than i wanted, only one thing to say cause of that: This year, snow is a bitch.

Anyway, a bit more detail/effort/whateverucallit in this entry than the last one cause this mission was a bit more special. :)

Hope you enjoyed it as much as I have enjoyed translating me and my friends' play styles and how we act in this game on paper.

6. The Core

**UNSC Infinity, Hanger Bay February 10, 2558 Late in the

Afternoon**

* * *

><p>A Pelican dropship flew into the hanger, hovered ever so carefully as the pilot turned it around, and landed with ease. After a few moments, the back ramp opened up, revealing the four-man Spartan team known as Crimson. Their leader, Spartan Joe, was the first to head down the ramp. To his left: Spartan Bittany, to his right: Spartan Josh and directly behind: Spartan David, handling a number of Forerunner weapons he snatched from their previous mission.<p>

Joe looked around the hanger as he went, noting the busy work crews all rushing around preforming their daily tasks. However, there was one thing out of the ordinary that Joe noticed, someone that usually wasn't seen in the hanger and she was staring right at him.

"Crimson." Commander Palmer uncrossed her arms. "Hope you had fun." She turned her gaze to David. "I see David brought home some gifts." David smiled. "Well I figured the R&D boys needed some new toys to play with, seeing as we Spartans are still clearing up their playgrounds." Palmer smirked. "Good. It'll keep them from bugging me for a bit." She brought her arm up, extended her thumb and pointed behind her. "Why don't you run those toys to the eggheads now?"

David looked at Joe, the latter nodded in approval. Then, without another second wasted, David hobbled down the Pelican ramp and off to drop of his souvenirs. One he was out of sight, Joe turned to Palmer, his face portrayed a mix of satisfaction, and curiosity. "Now then," He took off his Recon helmet and placed it underneath his arm. "To what honor do we owe this visit Commander?"

Palmer crossed her arms. "What? I can't be the first one to great your team every now and then?" She said in a somewhat playful manner. Joe crossed his arms in response, holding on to his helmet with one of his hands. He stared at the Commander not believing her for a second.

Palmer sighed, she let her arms fall to her sides. "Fine. You got me." She looked at the Spartan with a more serious face. "The data you pulled out of the jungle ties in with some earlier info on Covenant archaeological teams. It seems like they found something of value."

"And you want us to take it from them." Brittany cut in. "That's correct Spartan." Palmer responded, keeping her gaze on Joe. "It's sudden, but we need this done." Joe put his helmet back on. "Don't worry ma'am." He said as he went through the motion. "We'll get it done."

After a few moments, Commander Palmer nodded, spun around, and left Spartan team Crimson. As soon as she went, Crimson team paced off in the direction of the nearest armory to replenish their supplies. On the way, Joe called David over the radio and told him about the "surprise mission." The latter was all to happy for a mission that could require his explosive skills.

Within a half an hour, Crimson team loaded up in another Pelican dropship, ready and waiting to get their next mission underway.

* * *

><p>Twenty minutes later...Above location designated "The Cauldron"

"We're approaching the LZ." The pilot of the Pelican announced. "Beginning landing sequence now."

"Roger." Spartan Joe responded, he stood up and faced his team. "Alright, we're here to liberate an artifact from some Covenant archaeologists. Simple snatch and grab." He looked at David. "Try not to blow everything up until we retrieved the artifact eh David?"

"No promises." The latter chuckled. Joe let out a short sigh before continuing. "I don't expect too much resistance, but these Storm bastards are real zealots of the old Covenant religion. So they'll do whatever the can to prevent us from getting that artifact."

"So to put it bluntly, expect short numbers but a hell of a fight." Josh said with a shrug. "That about sum it up?" Joe smiled, he moved to the back of the Pelican. "You'll find out soon." As he finished, the back ramp of the dropship opened up. The Spartans hustled out of the ship, meeting the Forerunner metal with their boats.

David paced over to a ledge on the left, he looked down and saw the lava flowing below. "How bout we have a barbecue when we're done?"

"Sure, if you like the smell of burnt Unggoy." Joe said as he walked past the man.

"Oh I rather have some fried Kig-Yar. Tastes just like chicken or so I've heard."

"Hm...perhaps I'll try some and tell you if that's a load of bullock or not."

Josh leaned over to Brittany. "They serious?" Brittany shock her head in disappointment. "Yeah, and I'm pregnant with David's child."

"I heard that!" David whipped around. "And if you are, it's not mine!"

"Yeah, like she'd let you touch her in the first place." Joe added.

"I take offence to that!"

"Good."

Before anyone could add onto that, Joe raised his hand and made a cutting motion with it. His sign to quit the bullshit and get focused. Crimson team moved forward till they came across two paths, one leading to a ledge another to whatever was passed said ledge. Joe motioned Josh to follow him up the right path. They crouch walked up the it and looked around.

"Tell me," Joe said to Josh. "What do you see?"

"Single Elite plus a half a dozen Grunts."

"Good, what else?"

"They have a turret." Josh pointed to it. "Up on the ledge, its covering the entire area."

"Anything else?"

Josh shook his head. Joe sighed, he pulled out his sniper rifle he had slung on his back and pointed to the left, near one of the larger rocks. Josh waited for him to say something, anything but the ex-ONI operative didn't utter a sound.

A few moments passed, Josh was about to say something when he saw a flicker of light. It took him a second to recognize what it was: a cloaked Sangheili. Without anymore delay, Joe fired his sniper, purple blood splashed on the large rock as the Zealot Elite's active camo failed with his death. His body fell with a thump.

The remaining Storm faction members looked at the Spartan, surprised that he was there. "Kill them." Joe said in a cold tone. With their cue given, David and Brittany rushed towards the Covenant from the left path and fired upon them, cutting them down as they tried to defend themselves.

Up on the ledge, the lone Grunt on the turret took the two Spartans below. About to fire on the two when a sniper round pierced through his skull, causing him to fall backwards on the cold, Forerunner made floor: Dead. The shooter; Joe, waited a few moments to see if any other Covenant would pop their heads out before lowering his rifle.

"Josh, take point." He said before springing upward. Josh smiled, he sprinted off the cliff edge and towards the Forerunner made bridge. The Spartan climbed up the ramps to the higher level, his Railgun at the ready. He reached the top and looked around, spotting several Jackals to his right, a few Grunts scattered around, and one Ranger-class Elite.

Josh decided to focus on the Sangheili first, his Railgun charged with energy. A few moments before he fired, the Elite activated his jetpack and flew into the air, causing Josh's round to hit a poor, stupid Grunt standing behind the Sangheili. His body flew through the air and into the lava river below. Josh cursed, quickly reloading his weapon he aimed at the Ranger now flying over his head.

Josh counted down the seconds in his head as his weapon began to charge, keeping pace with the airborne Elite who was firing upon him. Suddenly, the Ranger jerked, his body drifted to the right and flipped upside down. His jetpack still active, the Ranger slammed into the ground. His body began to drift thanks to the jetpack.

"Target down." Joe said, slowly walking to the base of the bridge. Josh canceled the charge on his Railgun, he lifted his arms in the air in a "What the hell?" motion. David brushed passed him. "Better

luck next time!" He taunted as he unleashed his two SMGs on the surrounding Grunts. Brittany sprinted passed Josh and threw a few grenades at the Jackels, most landing behind their shields and shredded threw the bird reptiles.

"Crimson." Miller said over the radio. "The path ahead is blocked, but I found a power source nearby." A marker appeared on Crimson team's visors. "Wouldn't hurt to give it a go."

"Roger." Joe looked at David. "Alright button pusher, work you magic." David gave a quick salute, paced over to the terminal marked on his visor, and pressed on the holographic panel. After a few moments, there was a loud rumble, followed by Miller's voice over the comms. "That did it, door's opened."

"Move." Joe said as he sprinted towards the now opened entrance. Crimson team plowed through at least a dozen Grunts as raced towards the door, the Spartans downed them in a hail of bullets and moved on. They climbed up a set of ramps and saw Covenant equipment scattered all around, as well as a number of Grunts and Elites rushing around. Some took pot shots at them, others ducked behind a crate, some type of equipment, or something other that they could hide behind. Clearly they weren't prepared for an enemy attack.

"Well this will be easier that I thought." Joe said, more to himself than anyone else. He looked to David. "Feel like showing them the Firestorm?" David pulled his head back and laughed. "We haven't done that one in a good while." He looked back at Joe. "Why not? After all, it is a classic." David pulled out a can of C7 and a few frag grenades.

He opened the C7 and began to wrap it around the frag grenades. After checking his work, he began to bounce one of the grenades in his hand. "Ready?" David asked cheerfully. Joe raised both his Magnums in response. "On your go..."

David smirked, he threw the grenade at a pair of Elites foolishly firing their plasma weapons wildly at them. Joe tracked the grenade with one of his pistols, he waited till the grenade was a few feet away from the Sangheii before firing at it. His round hit right below the trigger on the grenade (NOTE: To all who didn't know, UNSC Frag Grenades have a button trigger instead of a pin.) causing it to detonate.

The combined explosion of C7 followed by the scattering pieces of the frag grenade caused a 'fire grenade' of sorts, the pieces helped extended the blast radius of the C7 explosion, and those pieces that _weren't_ consumed by the fire ball impaled the unfortunate targets of the grenade; in this case the two Sangheii. Set on fire and pierced by metal, the two warriors didn't last more than a moment against the "Firestorm" grenade.

After that demonstration, David threw the rest of the grenades at nearby, cowering Covenant. In session, Joe shot each with his Magnums, triggering the "Firestorm". All but a handful of Grunts survived the assault. Joe holstered his Magnums, about to order his team to finish the off the rest when a Phantom dropship raced towards them. The Covenant ship fired its plasma turret at the Spartans, forcing them into cover.

The dropship continued to fire on the Spartans, the rounds exploding off of their chosen cover and seemingly shaking the ground. After a few minutes, the Phantom flew away, still shooting off some rounds as it went. Josh was the first to poke his head out and received a Carbine round in the head.

He jerked his head back, then slowly, carefully looked around the corner. In front of him was a mix of Jackels, Grunts, and Elites all in defensive position. Josh relayed this info to the rest of his team, Joe looked at David. "Not too bad, ready for some fireworks?" David grinned, he pulled out his BR and loaded a round in the chamber. Joe took that as a 'yes.'

On his go, Crimson team sprinted out of cover and charged at the Storm members. Each side fired at the other in an epic crossfire of plasma and projectiles. At that time, Dalton came over the comms, saying something about some anti-air near Crimson's position. None of the Spartans of Crimson team paid attention, they were focusing on the enemy reinforcements.

Brittany tackled an Elite to the ground, quickly pulling out a knife and stabbing him in the neck. Josh covered her, shooting another Elite with his last Railgun round. Afterward, he placed in on his back and pulled out his Magnum, firing away at nearby hostiles.

David smashed his elbow into the jaw of an unfortunate Jackel, shattering the bone. The Kig-Yar staggered backwards, David then pulled his SMG to bear and fired near point-blank, the rounds tearing through the Jackel's face.

Joe ran up to a Sangheii, both knives in hand. The Elite brought his weapon up, ready to fire at the daring Spartan. Joe threw one of his knives in response, it cut through the Elite's shield and landed in its right eye. He roared in pain, dropping his weapon and grasping at the wound: It was a reflex that he would soon regret. Joe closed the distance between them, stabbed the Elite with his other knife and pulled out the 1st knife all in one motion.

The Sangheii grasped for air, he weakly clawed at the Spartan's helmet. Joe sunk his knife in deeper, the clawing stopped. He pulled out his knife as the Elite's body fell to the floor with a loud thump.

Joe looked around quick, noting that his team mopped up the last of the enemy reinforcements. He quickly wiped the dark purple blood off his knives before placing them back into the hidden slits on his armored shoulders. While he was doing that, David walked up to him.

"Just like old times, eh Captain?"

"I remember more explosions."

David let out a hardy laugh. "I guess that's my fault eh?"

Joe chuckled. "Perhaps." He turned to his friend and began to walk towards then past him. "If we're done here, lets move on and find tha-

Suddenly, he heard a strange noise coming from behind him, followed by a loud scream the Spartan was recently acquainted with. He turned his head around, his guess was right: Behind the Spartan stood a Promethean Knight.

"Get down!" Brittany yelled, her SAW blazing away seconds after she finished her sentence. Joe complied, he ducked down just in time. The Knight stood undisturbed by the multiple rounds pinging of its shields. It raised its weapon -a Suppressor- and returned fire. It would have been a stalemate if David hadn't charged the Knight, tackled it to the ground, and repetitively punched it until its body disintegrated in a show of light.

Joe picked himself up, looked at Brittany then David and gave them both a nod. Before either of them could say anything, Josh called out to his team.

"We have a whole mess of Crawlers inbound!"

Joe calmly pulled out his dual Magnums. "Let's give them a proper welcome."

It took Crimson team a few minutes to fight their way through the Crawler swarm. The Spartans moved uphill past a small rocky overhang, and were met by a single Watcher and two Knights. One of the Knights was a new class that Crimson hadn't seen before, it had what appeared to be wings or an 'X' threw its giant mushroom like back.

That Knight had a sniper weapon of some sort, Joe made a mental note to snatch it on the way back...assuming David didn't do so first. This engagement was short compared to the last. Joe walked over the Forerunner sniper, it looked like a larger version of those rifles David snatched on their earlier mission. He picked it up, studied it for a few moments, then walked to the rest of his team with the weapon in tow.

"Look what I found." Joe said, showing off the weapon. "Shiny, no?"

David walked over to Joe and politely grabbed the weapon. He twirled it around, looking at it from every angle. "Sniper?" He said, more as an out loud thought than a question to anyone. After a few more moments, he tossed the weapon back to Joe. "Nice find Captain." He said.

"Who would have known that Prometheans would be here?" Josh said.

"Considering that they're helping the Storm faction, it's not out of the question." Joe responded. "Still, one would think they would be helping out on the front lines, not as security for a dig."

"Short handed?"

"Doubt it." Joe walked over to a Forerunner terminal that Brittany was studying. "So this was what they were guarding?"

"Seems like it." She nodded to David. "Wanna give it a press button man?"

David strutted over, making it look like he was this all important big shot at some company or -more accurately- a man full of himself. He pressed it, a bright blue light emerged in front of them. When the light vanished, a hovering rectangular object appeared. Crimson team moved around it.

"Well here's are artifact." Josh said, tapping on the Forerunner object. "Any guess on what it does?"

"Something related to screwing over every logical thing we think we know." Brittany said. "Forerunners are big on things like that."

"I think its a teleportation device." David said. "Maybe something like a relay for that Slipspace grid these Prometheans travel across."

"You know, that's actually a reasonable guess Dave." Joe said.

"Oh no, he's using his brain." Josh said jokingly. "Its a sign of the Apocalypse. Everybody run!"

"Miller." Joe said, trying to raise him over the comms. "Artifact secure. Can we have some evac?"

"Roger Spartan." Miller responded. "Fireteam Castle just cleared up the enemy AA in your area. Dalton's sending a bird now."

The Pelican arrived a few minutes afterward, David and Josh loaded up the Forerunner artifact and secured it. Brittany nodded to Joe that the package was secured, both Spartans made their way into the Pelican. Joe made it up the ramp when Promethean reinforcements warped in behind them.

"These guys just don't know when to quit." Josh said, hoping out of his seat, about to race out of the Pelican when Joe stopped him. "No need." Joe said as he pulled out his Magnum and returned fire on the Prometheans. "Besides, didn't you hear the radio?"

Josh paused for a moment, he switched off the comms a while ago, he turned it back on and heard Dalton speaking with the pilot of this dropship.

"-repeat, there are numerous Covenant aircraft inbound to your position. If Crimson and the artifact are secure, get out of there."

"Roger, standby." The pilot looked over his shoulder. "You Spartans good back there?"

"We're all set, just go!" Brittany yelled.

"Understood, aaaaand we're away." The Pelican flew off towards the setting sun, speeding away from the Prometheans still futility firing at the dropship.

Joe and Josh sat down, David pulled out a detonator.

"When did you plant explosives?" Josh asked.

"When you weren't looking." David said. "3...2...1...Boom."

David pressed the detonator, a large, almost mushroom like explosion erupted where the Prometheans stood, as well as some lesser explosions destroying the Covenant excavation equipment. The Pelican shook slightly from the recoil of the blast, the pilot quickly adjusted the bird then closed the back ramp.

"C12?" Joe asked, spinning the captured Forerunner sniper between his hands. "You were always one for making an impression."

David chuckled as he put the detonator away. "What can I say? I like to finish my missions with a bang."

* * *

><p> END OF EPISODE

Woooo! Finally finished this. As you can tell(assuming you played H4 Spartan Ops**) I skipped some small encounters/details for the sake of time. Others I changed for some realism of the situation.**

Hope u enjoyed me and my friends theatrics. Sorry to say but this will be the last entry I'll add to this story for a while. Mainly due to crazy work hours and so I can focus on other projects.

Thanks to everyone who read this story and I hope you will continue reading it when I pick up where I left off.

In the meanwhile, any possible questions you may or may not have on this story(or about Halo in general) leave a message and Ill be happy to answer.

End
file.